

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment After Final Action be admitted under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Applicants believe that consideration of this Amendment could lead to favorable action that would remove one or more issues for appeal.

No claims have been amended. No claims have been canceled. Therefore, claims 21-45 are now presented for examination.

Claims 21, 22, 31 and 32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) as being unpatentable over Hollander et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,347,388 B1), in view of Bauman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,226,716). In response, applicants submit a declaration pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 enclosed herewith to overcome the Hollander reference.

The newly submitted declaration illustrates that the present application had been conceived and reduced to practice in the United States at least prior to September 21, 2000, the filing date of Hollander. Reduction to practice occurs upon proof that the inventor had prepared drawings or other descriptions of the invention that are sufficiently specific to enable a person skilled in the art to practice the invention. Pfaff v. Wells Elec., Inc., 525 U.S. 55.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection has been obviated since Hollander has been overcome by the enclosed 37 C.F.R. §1.131 declaration, and Bauman does not disclose or suggest the invention as claimed.

Claims 23, 24, 33 and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hollander et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,347,388 B1), in view of Bauman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,226,716) as applied in claims 22 and 32 in view of Hayes (U.S. Patent No. 5,799,266). In addition, claims 25-30 and 36-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hollander et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,347,388 B1), in view of Bauman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,226,716) as applied in claims 24 and 34

in view of Hayes (U.S. Patent No. 5,799,266) and further in view of Miller et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,175,948).

For the reasons stated above, applicants respectfully submit that the above rejections have also been obviated because of the enclosed 37 C.F.R. §1.131 declaration, and any combination of Bauman, Hayes and Miller does not disclose or suggest the invention as claimed.

Applicants emphasize that submission of the enclosed declaration pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.131 should not be construed as an acquiescence to the any of the reasons for rejection set forth in the February 20, 2004 Office Action.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections have been overcome, and that the claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request the rejections be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at (303) 740-1980 if there remains any issue with allowance of the case.

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
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